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Established A.D. 1841.

Hongkong, 6th November, 1885.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our communications relating to the news columns should be addressed to THE EDITOR.

Correspondents forward their names and address with communications addressed to the Editor, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.

All letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

No anonymous signed communications that have already appeared in other papers will be inserted.

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P.O. Box. 20. Telephone No. 12.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, DECEMBER 6TH, 1885.

This change in the political situation in the Far East since the war broke out between China and Japan is very strongly marked. Scarcely anything is as it was prior to that conflict. China is no longer a Power to be reckoned with. She is now generally regarded as a huge but flabby Empire held together rather by the mutual jealousies of other countries than by her own powers of cohesion. She is destitute of any army worthy of the name; she has yet no trained troops that can stand the shock of encounter with disciplined soldiers. Her navy is practically a vanquished quantity, for the Nanyang squadron is for the most part a collection of small untrained cruisers quite unable to meet the squadrons of the Western Powers, while the Foochow and Canton fleet are only useful for policing the coasts and keeping down piracy. The corruption of the officials, the main cause of the collapse of their defences when engaged with the Japanese forces, has not been affected by the long roll of resources, and the same evils infest the manufacturing as before the war. There seems literally no moral health in China; the taint of corruption hangs over every class, perturbs every strata of society. No sign of improvement, no appearance of a desire to wash and be clean, to accomplish a moral regeneration, can be traced in any section or class of the people. Attempts are being made in a perfunctory and casual kind of way to reorganise the navy, which may by and bye assume more concrete shape, and efforts will undoubtedly be put forth to reconstitute the land forces, such as they are, but it will be some time before China will be able to command respect much less excite fear.

This being generally recognised, the Western Powers have become uneasy lest some state, more aggressive than others, should quickly profit by the weakness and inertness of the Peking Government to secure a footing on the soil of the Celestial Empire. It is alleged that the fear of this prompted the three Powers, Russia, France, and Germany, to intervene to prevent Japan acquiring territory in Manchuria, and ever since the conclusion of peace on an uneasy feeling has prevailed that some Power or other is seeking for concessions from China which shall give the concessionaire a hold over the decrepit Empire. The foreign squadrons, which during the recent war were greatly strengthened, have not been cut down to their normal strength. On the contrary, some of them have even been increased. The Russian Government are sending out additional to their already formidable fleet, which will soon comprise four ironclads, four armoured cruisers, one third class cruiser, five sloops, and three gun-boats, of a slightly greater total tonnage than the British squadron in these waters. The British Government, which some time since withdrew the *Crescent*, *Gibraltar*, *Pallas*, and the *Pigeon*, have lately decided to retain the *Edgar*, *Spartan*, and *Essex* on

the strength of the squadron, and are sending out the cruiser *Invincible* to replace the *Mercury* and the *Narcissus* to relieve the *Absolute*. *Caroline*. They are evidently in a panic, but they are evidently deemed the situation to be less settled and uncertain in China generally to be more precarious than formerly. The French Government, which also reinforced their squadron in China, are not only maintaining the additions but propose to send out more vessels. Germany, who formerly was content with keeping one or two cruisers and a gunboat on the station part of the year, doing duty also in other portions of the great Pacific, now maintains quite a formidable squadron in Chinese waters. Lastly the United States, after resting satisfied for years with representation by a few obsolete wooden vessels, now sports the stars and stripes on a large armoured cruiser and several modern ships of considerable speed and armament.

Like the fleet gathered in Levantine waters watching developments in the Sultan's dominions, the foreign squadrons in the Far East are gathered for something more than mere protection of foreign lives and property. They are here to watch events in China, Japan, and Korea; they are waiting to see what is the next move in regard to that has been going on for years to secure predominance in the Central Kingdom. They represent the anxiety of each great Power to be lost in the cold of any chance their should cause a breaking of the porcelain. Most of them are ready, no doubt, to collect the chips, and those who do not covet possession are doubtless anxious to assist in mending fractures. No one Power desires to provoke war; it is even possible that no one Power wishes to acquire any exclusive benefit; but there is no absence of perfect trust in each other that compels all of them to assume an attitude of distrust. Nor do they trust China. They recognise that in this Empire which scarcely ever boasts possession of one capable official now Li Hong-chuan has lost prestige and power, foreign interests are not safe from attack, and that it may be necessary to restrain by force the rights acquired by Treaty. For some time to come, therefore, the political situation in China is likely to continue unstable and may become complicated. It is probable, however, that the Powers have a sufficient general understanding to prevent any chances of a quarrel unless some new and wholly unexpected development takes place. There certainly seems for the moment no cause for alarm. England and Russia appear to be good friends, though the latter is obviously using France as a convenient tool to further her ends, and Germany is content to remain a quiet observer of events. It is far from our purpose to sow discord or even to suggest suspicion, but we hope that the British Government, while giving other Powers due credit for pacific intentions, will keep a bright look out for all contingencies.

Attempts are to be made to improve the rice of Cochin China by introducing seed from Burma.

The C. N. Co.'s steamer *Changhsia* left Port Darwin on 2nd inst., and may be expected here on or about Wednesday, the 11th inst.

The O. S. S. Co.'s steamer *Adelaide*, from Liverpool, left Singapore yesterday morning and may be expected here on or about the 11th inst.

The C. P. steamer *Empress of India* arrived at Kobe at midnight on Tuesday and left at 11 a.m. on Wednesday for Vancouver via Yokohama.

Japanese vernacular papers publish a telegram said to have been received from London by the Yokohama Specs Bank announcing an intention on the part of England and Germany to take up China's bonds to pay off the whole indemnity to Japan. This says the Japanese papers, is doubtless a piece of diplomatic mischief directed against the plannings of France and Russia.

The following gentleman will play for the World against Scotland in the cricket match beginning to-day at 2 p.m. and continuing to-morrow at 11 a.m.—
Major Reado Mr. P. G. Davies, R.A.
Captain Eccles Mr. S. L. Smith
Rev. G. F. Walling Mr. C. M. Finch
Mr. G. Failes, R.B. Mr. B. C. Ellis
Mr. L. Sanderson, R.B. Mr. H. Hancock

By the courtesy of Major Failes and officers, the band of the Hongkong Regiment will attend this afternoon and by the courtesy of Col. Sir Paul and officers the band of the Rifle Brigade will attend to-morrow afternoon.

One of the consequences of the fall of prices, and the consequent decline of profits and of the rate of interest for loanable capital, is an advancing tendency in the rates for life insurance. We have before us the new tables of one of the leading life offices, from which we find that profits and dividends terminating six months hence, have been raised—that for the earlier ages, for instance, to the extent of from about 2½ to even 7 per cent., according to the number of annual payments fixed. This step, it is explained, has been rendered necessary by the fall in the rate of interest, in consequence of which a sum of money invested in a fund under advantage was given up to the old rates to persons insured by limited payments.

With the development of commerce the system of credit in Japan is rapidly improving. On the subject of a recent Bankers' reunion in Tokyo, Mr. Yamamoto Tatsujiro, of the Bank of Japan, expressed surprise at the rapid increase during the past year in the amount of business done in business transactions in the capital. The total of the bills and notes discounted at the Clearing House in 1891, the first year of the institution's operation, was 160,000,000 yen. It increased gradually until the annual reached 285,000,000 yen in 1894. There are a large number of banks that have a branch in the Capital, and the bills exchanged at the Bank of Japan. The average daily amount of bills thus created at the Bank during the month of October was 110,570 yen in 1893, 190,000 yen in 1894, and 310,000 yen in 1895.—*Yamato Mail.*

The humorous and dramatic relief to be given by Professor E. A. Whitney to Mount Holyoake to-morrow evening bids fair to be a good production, particularly as it is the opinion of the press in cities where he has appeared, Mr. Whitney occupies a place in the front rank. He is said to possess a voice of rare suavity, power, and flexibility, and a pleasing presence that wins his audience at once. His programme is made up of selections from the most popular writers of the age, and each number in a glee in itself, so well adapted to the taste of the audience that it is seldom surpassed. It is to be hoped that Mr. Whitney will receive the patrarche which the public deserves.

CONSOLS GO DOWN ANOTHER QUARTER.

LONDON, 20th November.

The firm attitude taken by Lord Salisbury, and the consequent increased probability of trouble, has had a depressing effect on the money market, and Consols have gone down another quarter per cent.

PRACTICAL ENGINEERS.

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It is reported from Korea that a royal decree has been issued amending the laws of 18th August and restoring the title and dignity to the deceased Queen.

According to the Special correspondent of the *Hongkong Standard*, Mr. Townsend, a merchant of Chancery, and agent for the American Trading Company, has proceeded to Ningpo, and with a mining engineer on a geological mission. It is stated by the same correspondent that Korean Government has made a mining concession to the company referred to for a term of twelve years. The mining engineer is to have favourable reports concerning the prospects of gold mining in the province.

We translate the following from the Manila *Concreto*:—"According to a telegram received by the business agents of the Philippines Mining Syndicate, headed by Mr. D. H. J. Carpenter, the engineer at the mines, an American, has been brought to the mines of rich mineral deposits which have been found of gold, silver, and copper, and a large amount of tin, of which a large portion is to be made by the crushing machine. It is expected that he will leave the colony shortly, and to return to the United States, after having completed his work, and to report to the Government.

Lastly the United States, after resting satisfied for years with representation by a few obsolete wooden vessels, now sports the stars and stripes on a large armoured cruiser and several modern ships of considerable speed and armament.

It is reported from Manila that a royal decree has been issued by the King of Korea to the effect that the British, Spanish, and American Ministers, and the Consuls of the United States, are to be allowed to reside in the capital, and that the British Consul is to be appointed to the post of Vice-Consul.

It is also reported that the King of Korea has issued a decree that the British Consul is to be appointed to the post of Vice-Consul.

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MINTHES.
The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

THE APPROPRIATION BILL.

The CHAIRMAN.—Sir, I am aware that our object is to consider the Appropriation Bill, and I propose that we adopt on this occasion the course which has previously been adopted, that is, to take each item on the Bill, and explanations are given on any item that hon. members ask about. I take it that that course is agreeable to hon. members.

The objects of the items were adopted with the exception of one—Military Expenditure.

\$40,000. In regard to this.

Hon. C. P. CHATER said—I would ask that consideration of this item be postponed till the next meeting.—The answer to his Excellency's despatch was received by the Unofficial Members late on Monday afternoon, and we have scarcely had time to consider it. I therefore propose that we should therefore set aside the consideration of this question till this day week.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not quite understand the hon. member. Do you mean to say that the consideration of this question should be postponed in the Finance Committee till next week?

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Yes.—The CHAIRMAN.—Do I understand you to mean that we are to hold an adjourned meeting of the Finance Committee before the meeting of Council, so that we can consider this item in Finance Committee first and then in Council?

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Certainly.

Hon. Ho KAN.—In consequence of the despatch of the Adm. of the Navy, I should like to have some little time to study them.

The PRESIDENT.—I am sure the Government has no desire to hurry the consideration of this matter, but the despatch, of course, has been in the hands of the Unofficial Members for some days, and the despatch was also published at the earliest opportunity. However, our time is limited.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.—We understood, at the meeting we had to-day, that there are other despatches of a former date from the Governor containing certain recommendations in support of what had been represented to the Government by the Unofficial Members in the matter of the £10,000 contribution. If those despatches could be shown to us, we should be able to give full attention to this important point, and we would otherwise be able to give it.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think all the important despatches have been printed and laid on the Council table.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.—I understand several despatches had been written by the Governor. At the opening of the Council last year, the Adm. of the Navy, I think, he had been in communication with the Secretary of State on some other occasion, forwarding the views of the Unofficial Members on this subject.

The CHAIRMAN.—I will ask his Excellency if he has any other information to give the members, but it must be clearly understood that this item must be brought on at the Council next Thursday. It is important that we should have the estimates home at an early date, and there can be no delay after next Thursday.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.—Are there any other despatches?

The CHAIRMAN.—I am unable to answer any question of that kind. The question was answered practically in Council, when the despatches were put on the Council table. I think it is expected that the Adm. of the Navy, or the Secretary of State, on some other occasion, forwarded the views of the Unofficial Members on this subject.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—I will ask his Excellency if he has any other information to give the members, but it must be clearly understood that this item must be brought on at the Council next Thursday. It is important that we should have the estimates home at an early date, and there can be no delay after next Thursday.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL.—What time is the Council meeting?

The CHAIRMAN.—At half-past three.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Members might not have time to see all they have to say before the meeting of Council, and we could not keep the Council waiting.

The CHAIRMAN.—I think a quarter to three will be quite enough.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—I think a quarter to three will be quite enough.

The CHAIRMAN.—That gives us three quarters of an hour. I hope hon. members will have made up their minds as far as the subject of discussion will not be necessary.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Our minds are made up, but we want to consider the mode of procedure. There is scarcely one of us that has not made up his mind to vote against it, but what other course of procedure we may follow we do not know.

The CHAIRMAN.—The Government does not desire to appear to hurry matters, and it is agreed to meet on Thursday next at half-past two. I trust that will be convenient for the officials. The Committee stands adjourned until Thursday next at 2.30. That is all the business, gentlemen.

CORRESPONDENCE

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our Correspondents.

THE SCRATCHING OF THE POLICE TEAM AND FOOTBALL COMPETITION.

To THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS." Sir.—Will you allow me through the medium of your valuable paper to call attention to the football match which was to have taken place this (Thursday) afternoon between the Hongkong Football Club and the Hongkong Police. The match was arranged more than a fortnight ago, but it was decided to scratch it, and it is now to be rescheduled for Saturday evening.

The CHAIRMAN.—That gives us three quarters of an hour. I hope hon. members will have made up their minds as far as the subject of discussion will not be necessary.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Our minds are made up, but we want to consider the mode of procedure. There is scarcely one of us that has not made up his mind to vote against it, but what other course of procedure we may follow we do not know.

The CHAIRMAN.—The Public Works Extraordinary items were then passed on.

ADJOURNMENT.

The CHAIRMAN.—The Committee stands adjourned until Thursday next at 2.30. That is all the business, gentlemen.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHINA MAIL."

Sir.—The following is an "elegant extract" from your contemporary:—"It is easy for any Chinaman of good standing to get an annual pass, which exempts him from carrying a light, and he has no trouble in finding a place where he can obtain such a pass." This is a most impudent statement, which I hope you will bring to the notice of the Chinese Settlements, under which the Chinese are placed on deposit with the Colonial Treasurer, and the Government is made liable to make good all losses so placed on deposit, together with interest at the rate of two per cent per annum.

Where the parties desire to obtain a greater sum, they may do so, by applying to the Bill of Exchange, or, in case of absence of the Court, to the Consul or Consular Agent.

A MEMBER OF THE CLUB TEAM. Hongkong, 5th December, 1895.

LIGHT IN THE "CHINA MAIL."

To THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS." Sir.—The following is an "elegant extract" from your contemporary:—"It is easy for any Chinaman of good standing to get an annual pass, which exempts him from carrying a light, and he has no trouble in finding a place where he can obtain such a pass." This is a most impudent statement, which I hope you will bring to the notice of the Chinese Settlements, under which the Chinese are placed on deposit with the Colonial Treasurer, and the Government is made liable to make good all losses so placed on deposit, together with interest at the rate of two per cent per annum."

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As another instance of the inconvenience of this "new kick" on the part of the police force, it is reported that two of my club colleagues, who do not happen to sleep on the premises, were not allowed to turn out on the night of the 2nd inst. last night, till a little after seven and these men on proceeding to their domiciles just after that hour were, they allege, arrested for having no pass or light.

The fact is these spasmodic convulsions on the part of the police have brought the conduct of the force into the utmost disrepute. It is equally true that the police are not to be blamed for this conduct, as Mr. Hooper, a boy-soldier, is a veteran warrior. Two years ago we had a more ridiculous, if less inconvenient, illustration of it in the sudden enforcement of the Ordinance, in the most unilitary manner, in regard to European dogs, while the many overbearing Chinese curried favour to run wild.

In the same manner the English and French soldiers have, at intervals of a year or two, "put the ruffians to the test" to be looked for in "a higher place." We have frequent changes

of Government and Administration, and there is his own fate. Shanghai thinks the gods that we might be allowed to do without ones. As an old resident I consider the light and passage a good one. As far as I can remember it was given effect to in a reasonable manner, and was not objected to by the Chinese, till Mr. Stanley, now the Consul, came along, and then I have to say, six years ago, he got it stopped.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not quite understand the hon. member.

The CHAIRMAN.—Do you mean to say that the consideration of this question should be postponed in the Finance Committee till next week?

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Yes.

The CHAIRMAN.—Do I understand you to mean that we are to hold an adjourned meeting of the Finance Committee before the meeting of Council, so that we can consider this item in Finance Committee first and then in Council?

Hon. C. P. CHATER.—Certainly.

Hon. Ho KAN.—In consequence of the despatch of the Adm. of the Navy, I should like to have some little time to study them.

The PRESIDENT.—I am sure the Government has no desire to hurry the consideration of this matter, but the despatch, of course, has been in the hands of the Unofficial Members for some days, and the despatch was also published at the earliest opportunity. However, our time is limited.

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